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SUBJECT: A ROYAL RUMPUS, A NEW PROVINCE, A STOWAWAY, AND AN UNWANTED
CEMETERY: KWAZULU-NATAL ROUND-UP

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Zulu Kingship Dispute

¶1. (U) Prince Melizwe Dlamini of Nhlengezi formally asked the Pretoria High Court on September 30 to decide on his claim that he be declared a king with the same status as a Zulu monarch. Dlamini submitted his claim in 2005 to the commission set up by former President Thabo Mbeki to investigate kingship disputes. Dlamini states that he only wants to be recognized officially as Dlamini III, the head of the Dlamini clan, but many see Dlamini's claim as a direct challenge to the rule of Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini. Three chiefs from the Dlamini clan have since publicly rebuked Dlamini and said that the only Dlamini III they recognize is King Mswati III of Swaziland.

¶2. (SBU) If Prince Dlamini is granted the status of king, he will qualify for the same government resources as King Goodwill, including support staff, bodyguards, and a personal budget of R34 million (\$4.5 million), reported KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on the Royal Household Mike Tarr to Pol/Econ Assistant on October 22. Given that the KZN Royal Household Department announced on October 19 that over the next three fiscal years King Goodwill must pay back R8 million (\$1.1 million) that his court overspent, KZN may not find the notion of a second king appetizing. A second Zulu king would also require an amendment to the Traditional Leadership and Governance Act of KZN which currently only recognizes one Zulu monarch.

¶3. (U) KZN Premier Zweli Mkhize told a gathering in Pietermaritzburg on October 1 that the KZN Provincial Government only recognizes one Zulu monarch, King Goodwill Zwelithini. Mkhize vowed to never recognize any other king and instructed MEC (minister of executive committee, a provincial minister) for Local Government and Traditional Affairs Nomsa Dube to record the official lineage of the Dlamini clan. The Nhlengezi Traditional Leadership Alliance, however, supports Prince Melizwe Dlamini's claim and has vowed to sue 'whoever tries to distort the history of Nhlengezi.' The Pretoria High Court has ordered President Zuma to give reasons why the commission is unable to rule on Prince Melizwe Dlamini's claim or alternatively to extend the term of the commission by three months. The Portfolio Committee on the Royal Household will deliberate on the matter once the court has ruled on Prince Dlamini's status, said Tarr.

Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) Wins By-Elections

¶4. (U) On September 3, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) announced that the IFP had won the hotly contested by-election in Ward 11 in uMvoti Local Municipality. The ward

was left vacant after the murder of an IFP councilor in the area and was contested by both the IFP and the African National Congress (ANC). The area was affected by political intolerance and violence in the run-up to the by-election. IFP Provincial Secretary Bonginkosi Buthelezi issued a press statement saying the party is proud to have won four out of five by-elections in the province, including uMvoti. ANC Provincial Secretary Sihle Zikalala called on ANC members in uMvoti to accept the election result and 'remain calm.'

15. (U) On September 14, the IFP won three of six by-elections contested by the ANC and the IFP, including the legally disputed Ward 3 in Imbabazane. The IFP took ward 3 in Imbabazane from the ANC in the April General Election by a narrow margin. The ANC subsequently disputed the results in court and forced the community to hold elections again. 'The Imbabazane result is particularly gratifying given the legal consequences of the IFP's previous win in that ward,' said Buthelezi in a press release. The ANC did make inroads into IFP territory, however, as two of the three wards it won were IFP strongholds.

Durban Not to Follow Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Route

16. (U) eThekweni City Manager Michael Sutcliffe reported to local media on September 16 that Durban has opted out of the BRT system because it wants an integrated transport system that is 'slicker and more efficient for commuters.' Durban will instead introduce an integrated system that will allow commuters to use a single ticket on buses, trains and mini bus taxis. The plan will cost an estimated R1.5 billion (\$206.9 million) and will be phased in over the next five years.

Durban Park Becomes Stowaway Refuge

17. (U) Albert Park in the Durban Central Business District has
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become a halfway house for stowaways and a home to hundreds of foreign men waiting for ships that will take them to Europe, according to local media. The Mercury Newspaper conducted an investigation in August after two brothers suspected to be Tanzanian stowaways were rescued and their two cousins were found dead on a ship. South African Police Service (SAPS) Spokesperson Director Vincent Mdunge told the media that 'SAPS are concerned about the increase number of stowaway incidents' and called on the municipality and port to work together to prevent more incidents. SAPS will increase patrols of the port area, said Mdunge.

Sugar Mill Deal Saves Jobs and Farms

18. (U) The future of Gledhow Sugar Mill was settled on August 31, reported local media. Gledhow, the first black-owned cane crushing facility, was sold by Illovo Sugar to Patrick Sokhela in 2004, and faced closure because of an outstanding debt of R60 million (\$8.3 million). A R350 million (\$48.3 million) landmark partnership was struck between Sokhela, Sappi Company, Illovo and thousands of local farmers who supply the mill with sugarcane. The new partnership will save the livelihoods of about 3000 farmers on the North Coast of KZN. Sugar baron and owner of the first Black-owned sugar mill Patrick Sokhela reported to Pol/Econ Assistant that the Gledhow deal received strong government support as it will benefit several emerging Black-owned sugarcane farms.

Former KZN Town to Choose Province

19. (U) On October 12, residents of Matatiele held a referendum to decide whether the town, which was transferred to Eastern Cape (EC) Province in 2004, will be reincorporated into KZN. Residents of Matatiele have been protesting since 2004 against being transferred to EC. Many residents claim that it would be better to be a part of KZN because service delivery has declined under EC governance.

¶10. (U) In 2006, residents took the matter to court arguing that they were not consulted before being forced to become a part of EC. The Constitutional Court ruled against them, however. The ruling led to a split in the ANC in the area, and saw the emergence of a sprinter group, the Independent National Congress that won one seat in the provincial legislature of the EC in the April national election. After the election, new Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Sicelo Shiceka promised the Matatiele community that a referendum would be held to gauge the views of the people. Chairperson of the Matatiele Action Group and Member of EC Provincial Legislature Mandla Galo told Pol/Econ Assistant on October 22 that the community is optimistic that the outcome of the referendum will result in a move back to KZN. The voting results are expected sometime in November 2009.

New Dube Terminal Operator Named

¶11. (U) Worldwide Flight Services (WFS) was selected as the exclusive operator of the cargo facility at the new R8 billion (\$1.1 billion) Dube Trade Port and international airport at La Mercy, north of Durban. WFS provides cargo handling services to over 107 international airports. WFS also provide passenger baggage services, ticket counter services, and mechanical support for jet bridges, baggage conveyors, and ground equipment. Economic Development and Tourism MEC Mike Mabuyakhulu made the official announcement on August 26 and said WFS had been appointed to a five-year contract to operate the state-of-the-art airfreight cargo facility, the first of its kind in Africa. 'We are hugely excited to announce WFS as the new Dube Trade Port cargo terminal operator to help achieve our objectives of becoming the air cargo terminal of choice in the South African market.'

Sobantu Residents Demand Services

¶12. (U) On October 18, residents of Sobantu just outside Pietermaritzburg protested the establishment of a cemetery on land they believe should be used for new housing. Approximately 200 people took to the streets in anger and burned tires, creating a blockade at the township's main entrance. Protesters also disrupted schools demanding that pupils join the protest march; burned government houses under construction; and looted shops owned by Pakistanis and Somalis. Police eventually restored calm to the area by firing rubber bullets into the crowds.

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¶13. (U) In addition to the lack of housing in the area, Sobantu protestors claim that service delivery is poor and municipal officials are corrupt. In explaining why they had destroyed government houses, one protestor said, 'These are being built by a corrupt municipality, which has to go.' Msunduzi Mayor Zanele Hlatshwayo has since met with Sobantu leaders, but protestors vowed to march again if their grievances are not addressed. Head of Community Services Zwe Hulane told Pol/Econ Assistant on October 21 that discussions with protestors will continue once Mayor Hlatshwayo returns from a nation-wide meeting of mayors and municipal managers to address poor municipal service delivery.

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